★★★★★

GIFT LIST FOR COOKS
Books catering to all culinary tastes
TASTE

SUPER VISIT BY DRAGONS
Imagine Dragons booked for Feb. 1
FACES

THURSDAY
December 14, 2017

StarTribune

26° 16°
Mostly cloudy with flurries. **B6**

Republicans reach a deal on tax bill

Revisions trade slightly higher corporate rate for bigger cut for wealthy; vote likely next week.

By JIM TANKERSLEY, THOMAS KAPLAN and ALAN RAPPEPORT
New York Times

WASHINGTON – The day after suffering a political blow in the Alabama special Senate election, congressional Republicans sped forward with the most sweeping tax rewrite in decades, announcing an agreement on a final bill that would cut taxes for businesses and individuals and mark the party's first major legislative achievement since assuming political control this year.

Party leaders in the House and Senate agreed in principle to bridge the yawning gaps between their competing versions of the $1.5 trillion tax bill, keeping Republicans on track for final votes next week with the aim of delivering a bill to President Donald Trump's desk by Christmas. The House and Senate versions of the tax bill started from the same core principles — cutting taxes on business sharply, while reducing rates and eliminating some breaks for individuals — but diverged on several key details. In the end, more of the Senate

See **TAXES** on A8 ►

WHAT'S IN THE BILL
- Corporate tax rate would be 21 percent, up from 20 percent in earlier versions.
- Top rate for richest Americans would be 37 percent.
- Tax breaks like the mortgage interest deduction would be scaled back.
- Overall cost of the revised legislation is still unknown.

Dayton picks Tina Smith; she pledges to run in 2018

BRIAN PETERSON • brian.peterson@startribune.com
Gov. Mark Dayton congratulated Lt. Gov. Tina Smith after his announcement Wednesday. At left was Smith's son, Samuel Smith.

Franken lauds replacement; GOP starts move against her.

By ERIN GOLDEN and J. PATRICK COOLICAN
Star Tribune staff writers

Lt. Gov. Tina Smith accepted an appointment to the U.S. Senate on Wednesday, agreeing to replace Al Franken as one of Minnesota's most high-profile elected officials and vowing to protect the seat for Democrats in next year's special election.

"Though I never anticipated this moment, I am resolved to do everything I can to move Minnesota forward," Smith said, moments after DFL Gov. Mark Dayton announced that she was his choice to replace Franken, who is resigning as a result of a sexual harassment scandal.

When she officially joins the Senate — likely to happen in early January — Smith will join Sen. Amy Klobuchar to make Minnesota one of only four states with two

See **APPOINT** on A11 ►

Move up, not out?
Sen. Fischbach vows to handle two jobs, lieutenant governor and state senator. **B1**

Tina Smith résumé
A closer look at state's next U.S. senator. **A11**

Taking a pass
U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison won't make a Senate run in 2018. **A11**

'Velvet hammer' insider must craft her own public persona.

By ERIN GOLDEN and JESSIE VAN BERKEL
Star Tribune staff writers

When former Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak needed a steady hand to manage the city's highly scrutinized response to the collapse of the I-35W bridge, he turned to Tina Smith. When Gov. Mark Dayton needed a similarly deft touch in the final push to approve state funding for a new Vikings stadium, he also turned to Smith.

Smith's prowess at navigating Minnesota's overlapping political, business and labor interests at the highest level prompted Rybak to dub her "the velvet hammer" for her mix of personal warmth and toughness. After several decades working mostly behind the scenes in DFL politics, Smith as Dayton's choice for U.S. senator is now stepping in a very public way into

See **PROFILE** on A11 ►

PolyMet proposes $544M for risks

Company says it would offset costs of any harm at proposed mine Up North.

By JOSEPHINE MARCOTTY
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PolyMet Mining Corp. says it will put up $544 million in financial protections for the first three years of construction and mining at its proposed copper-nickel facility in northern Minnesota to insulate taxpayers from any environmental damage that could result.

The so-called "financial assurance" is the last piece required in PolyMet's application for a permit to construct a $650 million mine and processing plant near Hoyt Lakes, the company said.

The assurance estimate in PolyMet's financial proposal, which is considerably higher than the company predicted a year ago, now goes under state review.

Along with other permit requests covering air quality, water quality and a tailings dam, it is expected to be open for public comment early next year.

PolyMet's is the first of what could be several copper-nickel mines in northeast Minnesota, and would be the first to receive state permits. Many northern Minnesota residents have greeted it as hope for returning the Iron Range to its mining heyday.

But the permitting process has grown lengthy, in part because copper-nickel mining carries far greater environmental risks than the region's taconite industry; its runoff waste can produce heavy metals that can contaminate streams and groundwater.

The proposal unveiled Tuesday sets the floor for one of the most critical decisions facing Minnesota: how to protect

See **POLYMET** on A7 ►

Medtronic settles Infuse case with five states, paying $12M

By JOE CARLSON and JIM SPENCER
Star Tribune staff writers

Medtronic has agreed to pay $12 million to five states to resolve a lawsuit that accuses the medical device company of misleading doctors and the public about the safety of a controversial bone-growth product that has been blamed for thousands of patient injuries.

Medtronic admitted no wrongdoing when it agreed to settle the complaint from the five states over its biotech product Infuse, which contains a genetically engineered version of a human bone-growth protein used during spine-fusion surgery.

Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum said Wednesday that Medtronic Sofamor Danek USA, a unit of Minnesota-run Medtronic, has agreed to settle allegations that the company broke state laws by secretly manipulating journal articles to make Infuse appear

See **MEDTRONIC** on A16 ►

Target pays up for same-day delivery

JEFF WHEELER • Star Tribune
Target's grocery sector should benefit from expansion of same-day delivery services.

$550M Shipt deal seen as move to counter Amazon.

By KAVITA KUMAR
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Target Corp. is getting serious about same-day delivery of groceries and other items with a $550 million deal to buy Shipt Inc.

The cash purchase is the Minneapolis-based retailer's largest acquisition in decades and represents one of its boldest answers yet to the growing Amazon threat.

Target said Wednesday it will leverage Shipt's technology and its network of shoppers to bring same-day delivery to about half of its 1,800 stores by next summer and to most of its stores before the next holiday shopping season.

"We believe we'll now be able to leap several years ahead, significantly accelerating our nationwide same-day delivery," John Mulligan, Target's chief operations officer, told reporters during a media call.

Shipt, a Birmingham, Ala.-based company with 270

See **TARGET** on A13 ►

TOP NEWS

RUSSIAN PROBE DEFENDED
Senior Justice Dept. official stands by Mueller, denies GOP claim of bias. **A8**

Fed hikes key interest rate
Growing economy cited in move, which was expected. **D1**

U.S. peace role is renounced
Palestinians say U.N. should replace U.S. **A6**

No concession in Alabama
Election judge in Senate race says automatic recount is unlikely. **A3**

Urban parking on the decline
Ride sharing, autonomous cars mean less parking needed. **A2**

LOCAL NEWS

Parents allege overtreatment
They claim Burnsville dentist performed unnecessary work. **B1**

Super Bowl rehearsal
Mpls. North High School football players tapped for practice day. **B1**

SPORTS

Twins seeking starter for '18
But they signed injured Michael Pineda with an eye toward 2019. **C1**

Up to the tallest tasks
Vikings lineman Rashod Hill stands out as a fill-in. **C1**

BUSINESS

4 Bruegger's Bagels close
Poor financial performance cited at Twin Cities locations. **D4**

VARIETY

Bed-rest moms get a boost
TV reporter delivers baskets of hope to Twin Cities moms. **E1**

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Hurricane Harvey's deluge showed clear signs of human-caused climate change, studies say. **A2**